



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1991/5/Add.1
1 July 1991

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Working Group on Indigenous Populations
Ninth session
22 July-2 August 1990
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS PERTAINING TO THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS OF INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

Information received from non-governmental organizations

Note by the Secretary-General

Information submitted by The Movement Tupaj Katari

Considering that the "discovery of the New World" by the Spanish conquistadors, that is, the brutal invasion of the Americas 500 years ago, marked the beginning of a period that is without doubt the darkest and most barbarian in the annals of indigenous peoples of the western hemisphere,

Considering that from the beginning of that fateful day (12 October 1492) that historians qualify as an accident of history, the conquest erected by force a colonial system on the American continent and caused the brutal destruction of the aboriginal civilizations (Inca, Maya, Aztec, etc.), the annihilation of their thousand-year-old cultures and ancient traditions, the extermination of entire populations, the genocide pure and simple, the torture, servitude, enslavement and daily negation of their values,

Convinced that, contrary to the falsified version of history by the colonizers, it is more important than ever to re-establish the historical truth that the question is not one of discovery or of an encounter, but rather of a confrontation of two worlds: that of the oppressor and that of the oppressed, the shock of two cultures and two irreconcilable civilizations, of two conflicting visions of the universe, of two systems of contradictory values - the Indian being collectivist, communal, humane, fraternal, peaceful, respectful of Mother Earth and in harmony with the Universe; the European being greedy, individualistic, ambitious, wager of war and destroyer of nature in order to satisfy the thirst for power and profit,

Paying homage to the memory of some 90 million Indians who were exterminated, massacred, burned alive, to the survivors who were enslaved yesterday and live in misery today,

Considering that all that we have described truly constitutes a crime against humanity,

Deploing the preparations being made and the means employed by Western Governments, particularly by that of Spain, for the festive celebrations of the so-called "encounter of two worlds", or the "discovery", which we consider as an insult to the dignity of the indigenous peoples and a humiliation to those who have survived the colonial hecatomb,

Recalling that the States and Governments have a moral duty to reflect upon this human tragedy and crime perpetrated against civilized and peaceful peoples,

Recognizing that the vitality and the force of resistance and the struggle of the indigenous peoples is rooted in their national identity, motor of their own history, and in the constant valorization of the diversity of their cultural and linguistic expression, as well as their social structures, legal institutions and their philosophy, all of which are an integral part of human patrimony,

Reaffirming the necessity to apply the rights and fundamental freedoms as stipulated in the draft universal declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular the right to live in dignity, the right to land, to peace, to work and the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples and nations,

Conscious that nowhere will there be justice and peace as long as Indians, peasants deprived of their Mother Earth, surviving in misery and poverty, working in unworthy conditions, suffering racial discrimination and held in contempt, humiliated, a shame for Western civilization and a source of permanent conflict for the world,

WE, REPRESENTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, HAVE DECIDED TO:

Solemnly proclaim 1992 the International Year of Resistance and Struggle of the indigenous peoples for their rights, their dignity and their fundamental freedoms, with the symbolic date of 12 October 1991;

Demand that the Spanish Government as well as those of all Western colonial nations assume the moral and political responsibility for the reparation of the negative consequences of the invasion: the genocide, crimes, pillage of gold and silver, and pay indemnity to the descendants of the aggrieved peoples of the Americas in conformity with the provisions foreseen by international law;

Ask the international community to accept the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and nations as observers at all sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.
